



January 31, 2022

**Environment - Single-Use Plastics - Restrictions (HB135)**  
**Position: FAVORABLE**

Dear Chairperson Wilson and Members of the Economic Matters Committee:

Blue Water Baltimore is a nonprofit organization with a mission to restore the quality of Baltimore's rivers, streams, and Harbor to foster a healthy environment and thriving communities. **We write today in support of Environment - Single-Use Plastics - Restrictions (HB135).**

Single-use plastics cause major pollution problems throughout our watershed. They litter our neighborhoods, clog storm drains, and get into our waterways where they choke plant life and animals. Our Waterkeeper team sees plastic pollution every time they patrol our waterways – see the attached images for reference.

HB135 will help stem plastic pollution by requiring food service businesses to only provide single-use plastic items such as straws and utensils when a customer requests them, rather than automatically including them in table settings or carryout orders. This bill also includes an important disability rights provision requiring food service businesses to maintain a limited supply of single-use plastic straws for individuals who need them to accommodate physical or medical needs.<sup>1</sup>

By limiting the amount of single-use plastic items being distributed across our state, HB135 is an example of an “upstream” approach to pollution that will help build toward a zero waste future.

We urge a favorable report on HB0135.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Taylor Smith-Hams". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Taylor Smith-Hams  
Advocacy & Outreach Senior Manager

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<sup>1</sup> Duncan J.J. Kessler. (2019). [Plastic Straw Bans Can Run Afoul of the Americans with Disabilities Act](#). American University Law Review.



Middle Branch Park, Baltimore, MD. Photo Credit: Cody Matteson, Blue Water Baltimore.



Powder Mill Run, Baltimore, MD. Photo Credit: Alice Volpitta, Blue Water Baltimore.



Gwynns Run, Baltimore, MD. Photo Credit: Blue Water Baltimore.



Ferry Bar Park, Baltimore, MD. Photo Credit: Blue Water Baltimore.